

Message Text

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44

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CAB-09 CIAE-00 COME-00

DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-11 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 FAA-00

AID-20 XMB-07 MC-02 CIEP-02 OMB-01 PM-07 H-03 L-03

NSC-07 PA-04 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 /169 W
----- 055226

P R 091347Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8879

USINT DAMASCUS

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 7869

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRN SY

SUBJ: SYRIAN ARAB AIRLINES REEQUIPMENT DECISION

ATHENS FOR RCAA DWUR

REF: BEIRUT 7720 AND 7587

SUMMARY: DC 10 DEMONSTRATION SCHEDULED FOR JUL 9
WAS CANCELLED AS DOUGLAS AIRCRAFT CO HAS JUST
RECEIVED LETTER-OF-REJECTION FROM SYRIAN ARAB AIRLINES.
ALSO, QUPE MYSTERIOUSLY, DOUBLAS REP DAMASCUS
HAS BEEN EXPELLED FROM COUNTRY WITH NO EXPLANATION AS
TO REASON. END SUMMARY.

1. ON SATURDAY, JUL 6, ROBERT FOX, DOUGLAS AIRCRAFT
CO REP TEMPORARILY BASED DAMASCUS,
WAS ESCORTED BY SYRIAN SECURITY OFFICIALS TO THE LEBANESE
BORDER AND IS NOW IN BEIRUT. REASON FOR EJECTION WAS NOT GIVEN.

2. ON SUNDAY, JUL 7, GEORGE POHLE, DIRECTOR MIDDLE
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EAST FOR DOUGLAS AIRCRAFT CO, VISITED DAMASCUS TO

FINALIZE ARRANGEMENTS FOR DC 10 30 DEMONSTRATION SCHEDULED FOR JUL 9. AT 1430 HOURS HE WAS SUMMONED TO SYRIAN ARAB AIRLINES HQS BY ABDALLAH BADAWI. BADAWI HANDED LETTER TO POHLE SIGNED IN THE NAME OF BRIGADIER ANTAR, VICE CHAIRMAN AND MANAGING DIR OF THE AIRLINE. THE LETTER ACTUALLY WAS SIGNED BY E CHIHAB, AN OBSCURE ADMIN ASST.

3. LETTER STATED THAT "DUE TO THE INCOMPATIBILITY OF THE DC 10 AIRCRAFT WITH SYRIAN ARAB'S ACTUAL NEEDS IT HAD BEEN DECIDED TO ELIMINATE THE DC 10 FROM THE PRESENT EVALUATION". THIS ASSERTION FLIES SQUARELY IN THE FACE OF ASSURANCES GIVEN TO RCAA ON JUL 3 BY AIRLINE CHAIRMAN MOUKAYED AND CHIEF PILOT TINAWI STATING THA THEY WERE STILL EVALUATING THREE AIRCRAFT: DC 10, TRISTAR, AND A 300B. FURTHER, CHAIRMAN OF SELECTION COMMITTEE AT SAME TIME (AIR FOCE CHIEF NAXI JAMIL) INDICATED TO LOCKHEED-CALIFORNIA PRES DUANE WOOD THAT NO FINAL DECISION COULD BE REACHED BY SLECTION COMMITTEE UNTIL DC 10 DEMONSTRATION COULD BE EFFECTED.

4. WHEN BADAWI SUMMONED POHLE TO HIS OFFICE HE HAD EARLIER INDICATED THAT THE LETTER WAS ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SELECTION COMMITTEE. THEREFORE POHLE VERY PUZZLED BY LETTER-OF-REJECTION ON AIRLINE STATIONERY SIGNED FOR ANTAR BY MINOR OFFICIAL.

5. FOR APPROACHED IN HOTEL SEMARIMIS 1800 HOURS JUL 6 AND TOLD HE HAD TO LEAVE COUNTRY BY SECURITY OFFICIALS. FOX PROTESTED THAT HIS BELONGINGS WERE AT AIRPORT HOTEL AND WANTED TO KNOW REASON FOR BEING EXPELLED. SECURITY OFFICIALS WERE VERY POLITE BUT SAID THEY DID NOT KNOW REASON BUT HAD EXPLICIT ORDERS TO ACCOMPANY FOX TO LEBANESE BORDER. FOX WAS NOT PERMITTED TO MAKE ANY PHONE CALLES TO EMB OR ANYONE ELSE IN DAMSCUS. HE IS NOW IN BEIRUT AND UNDERSTANDABLY COMPLETELY PERPLEXED. SANFORD MCDONNELL, PRES OF MCDONNELL DOUGLAS CORP, ST LOUIS, HAS BEEN TRYING TO REACH CHAIRMAN OF SELECTION COMMITTEE, NAXI JAMIL, BY PHONE, TO GET EXPLANATION FOR UNEXPECTED REJECTION.

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6. AS RESULT OF REJECTION-NOTICE, DOUBLAS HAS CANCELLED DEMONSTRATION UTA DC 10 30 ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED FOR JUL 9. INDICATIONS HERE THAT AIRLINE NOT CONCERNED ABOUT ACTUAL SAFETY FEATURES OF DC 10 BUT APPEAR GENERALLY CONCERNED ABOUT ADVERSE IMAGE CREATED BY THY CRASH EARLIER THIS YEAR AND THAT THIS ADVERSE IMAGE COULD SEVERLY DILUTE PASSENGER APPEAL AND LOAD FACTOR OF ANY SYRIAN ARAB DC 10 FLEET DEPLOYMENT.

7 IN CONVERSATIONS TODAY WITH LOCKHEED-CALIFORNIA OFFICIALS THEY INDICATE THAT NNO REJECTION-LETTER HAS BEEN RECEIVED BY THEM BUT THEY ARE CONCERNED, AS IS RCAA, BY STATEMENT IN REJECTION-LETTER TO DOUBLAS THAT DC 10 AIRCRAFT IS INCOMPATIBLE WITH SYRIAN ARAB'S ACTUAL NEEDS AND THAT THIS COULD ALSO APPLY TO TRISTAR, SINCE DC 10 AND TRISTAR ARE ROUGHLY SIMILAR. WE ALSO CONCERNED BY NAZI JAMIL'S APPROACH LAST WEEK TO LOCKHEED-CALIFORNIA'S PRES DUANE WOOD, THAT THE AIRLINE WOULD LIKE A FIVE-YEAR GUARANTEE AGAINST OPERATING LOSSES BY LOCKHEED FOR DEPLOYMENT OF TRISTARS. WE FEAR THAT THIS UNUSUAL REQ WAS PROBABLY TRIGGERED BY AN ACTUAL FIVE-YEAR GUARANTEE BY GOF AND AIRBUS INDUSTRIE. WE ARE GREATLY WORRIED BY A 300B4 DESPITE LOCKHEED'S SUPERIOR SHOWING FLIGHT DEMONSTRATION LAST WEEK.

8. WITH REGARD TO REFTEL 7720, REFERRING TO LOCKHEED GUARANTEE ON DIRECT MAINTENANCE COSTS (\$470 PER FLIGHT HOUR), THIS ALSO INCLUDES MAINTENANCE BURDEN. TO RECAP, MAINTENANCE GUARANTEE INCLUDES FOLLOWING ELEMENTS: DIRECT MAINTENANCE - AIR FRAME AND OTHER; DIRECTO MAINTENANCE - ENGINE; AND MAINTENANCE BURDEN. WE UNDERSTAND MOUKAYED, CHAIRMAN OF SYRIAN ARAB, MISUSING LOCKHEED GUARANTEE BY STATING THAT IT DOES NOT INCLUDE MAINTENANCE BURDEN BUT RCAA CATEGORICALLY STATES LOCKHEED GUARANTEE DOES INCLUDE BURDEN. (NOTE: PLEASE WITHHOLD FROM ANY OTHER US AIRCRAFT MANUFACTURER THE FACT THAT LOCKHEED-CALIFORNIA HAS GIVEN MAINTENANCE GUARANTEE AS THIS EXTREMELY SENSITIVE. FURTHER, MAINTENANCE GUARANTEE MAY BE \$417 PER FLIGHT HOUR RATHER THAN \$470 AS QUOTED REFTEL 7720, ACCORDING GEORGE LOMBARD.)

9. WE ALSO NOTE APPARENT GOF DUPLICITY IN APPARENTLY TELLING CONFIDENTIAL

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SYRIAN FOREIGN OFFICE THAT A 300B WAS A COMMON MARKET AIRPLANE AND, AS SUCH, IMPLICITLY SUPPORTED BY HMG. BRITISH AMB MADE DEMARCHE TO SARG LAST WEEK ON BEHALF OF TRISTAR AND WAS TOLD THAT THEY HAD UNDERSTOOD THAT HMG WAS IN FACT SUPPORTING A 300B. HAPPILY THIS WAS STRAIGHTENED OUT VERY QUICKLY BUT TYPIFIES HARD-NOSED SALES APPROACH EXERTED BY FRENCH GOVT OFFICIALS AND AIRCRAFT SALESMEN IN SUPPORT OF A300B.
GODLEY

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